

# Women Airforce Service Pilots of World War II Receive Congressional Gold Medal

March 10, 2010

WASHINGTON — The Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) of World War II were honored with the Congressional Gold Medal during a ceremony today in Emancipation Hall at the Capitol Visitor Center. Both surviving members of the WASP, as well as representatives of deceased members of the organization, participated in the ceremony. The medal, presented by the Congressional leadership, honors WASP members for their pioneering military service that led to reform in the U.S. Armed Forces.

The WASP was composed of the first women in history to fly American military aircraft. They flew more than 60,000,000 miles in every type of aircraft and on every type of assignment flown by their male counterparts except combat missions. During that time, 38 women pilots lost their lives.

The obverse (heads side) of the WASP Congressional Gold Medal was designed by United States Mint Artistic Infusion Program Master Designer Joel Iskowitz and sculpted by United States Mint Sculptor-Engraver Phebe Hemphill. The design depicts the portrait of a WASP with three others in the foreground in period uniforms with an airborne AT-6 in the background. Inscriptions on the obverse are *WOMEN AIRFORCE SERVICE PILOTS* and *1942-1944*.

The medal's reverse (tails side) was designed and sculpted by United States Mint Sculptor-Engraver Don Everhart. The design features the three aircraft that the WASPs flew during their training: the AT-6, B-26 and P-51. The WASP wings are depicted at the base of the design. Inscriptions on the reverse are *THE FIRST WOMEN IN HISTORY TO FLY AMERICAN MILITARY AIRCRAFT, ACT OF CONGRESS* and *2009*.

A digital image of the WASP Congressional Gold Medal is available at: </learn/coin-and-medal-programs/medals>.

The United States Mint will also strike and sell three-inch and 1-1/2-inch bronze reproductions of the medal. These will go on sale March 26, 2010, at noon Eastern Time (ET) at the United States Mint's online catalog, <http://www.usmint.gov/catalog>. Customers may also order by calling 1-800-USA-MINT (872-6468). Hearing and speech-impaired customers with TTY equipment may call 1-888-321-MINT (6468).

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